

RESPONSIBILITY TO ACCREDITATION AGENCIES

International schools are responsible to meet the program and best practice standards of various accrediting agencies around the world; in some places international schools must also meet accreditation standards of the host country as well. It is important for international schools to be knowledgeable about and respond to recent changes in standards of accreditation. The Council of International Schools (CIS) and the Middle States Association (MSA) have added specific standards related to Child Protection Programs in their most recent edition of accreditation standards. International schools can reasonably anticipate that, following the leadership of The Council of International Schools and the Middle States Association, other accreditation agencies will similarly include Child Protection Standards in the next revision of their standards. All international schools will be well served by these standards in developing the Child Protection Program for their community.

Below is the statement from the Council of International Schools and Middle States.

To reflect evolving programs and practices in the areas of Child Protection and related issues as well as the continuity of learning programs in exceptional circumstances, CIS and MSA are introducing a specific number of amendments to the Accreditation Standards and Indicators contained in the 8th Edition of the "Guide to School Evaluation and Accreditation". These amendments will apply to all schools, whatever their position in the accreditation cycle, from 1st January 2013 onwards.

The changes will occur in Standard D1 and Indicators D1a, E4b, and G4b. The new versions now follow, with specific word changes or additions underlined:

Standard D1 The school shall have faculty and support staff that are sufficient in numbers and with the qualifications, competencies and sound moral character necessary to carry out the school's programs, services, and activities, to support fulfilment of the mission and objectives, and to ensure student protection and well-being.

Indicator D1a Recruitment and screening processes are in place to ensure that employees in all categories are appropriately qualified and of sound moral character.

Indicator E4b A culture of shared responsibility for the social and emotional well-being and protection of students is promoted by the school leadership and teachers through programs to address awareness, prevention and responsiveness to issues such as sexual harassment, substance abuse, hazing and bullying, and discrimination in any form.

Indicator G4b Appropriate and regularly reviewed arrangements exist to cover threats to the security of people and premises as well as to support – to the extent possible - program continuity under exceptional circumstances.

All updated accreditation documentation showing the above-mentioned changes will be designated as "Version 8.1".

CIS and MSA are confident that these changes will encourage schools to become even more pro-active and effective in the areas concerned, and that this will promote logical improvements in student learning and well-being. We hope you will offer collaboration and support by aligning your school with the revised Standards & Indicators and by contributing sample policies/programs in the new areas covered, namely:

- ☐ Child Protection and Harassment/Bullying/Discrimination etc.
- ☐ Continuing delivery of school program during exceptional circumstances (socio-political, natural disasters, epidemics, etc.)